2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1

for bullets is made in the body. If four men have fired and but three bullets are found, any one of them may be innocent of the death. If each can get twenty-four con-jurors to swear innocence with him, all secure acquittal. Any who cannot find twenty-four con-jurors are guilty and owe blood. If there are as many bullets as men, then all owe blood.

For killing a woman, which is a rare thing, blood may be taken. If she is unmarried, it is taken by her father's family; usually by her brother. If married, her father's family may take blood for her within the year. After that only her husband's family has the right to do so. Blood-gelt, if any, for a woman is very small. The tribe does not punish the murderer; it is purely a family affair. The death of a woman does not weaken the tribe, for she is of another blood and can easily be replaced from without; whereas a man cannot be replaced.

If a pregnant woman be killed two bloods can be claimed. Dom Kol Ashti told me that cases have occurred even in which a grave has been opened to settle the question of blood-gelt for the unborn child, and full payment claimed if it proved to be a male.

Cases in which killing is justified and is not punishable.—1. Blood may be taken for rape and none may be taken in return.

2. If the relatives of the man who is shot succeed in taking blood at once, shoot the murderer that day, the blood is laid and no more can be taken.

3. A woman taken in adultery may be killed along with her partner by her husband or brother, and no punishment follows. But should her husband kill her and not the man, her family can take blood for her.

In none of the above cases, I believe, does the tribe punish; nor has the tribe, at any rate in some places, the power to punish a crime committed within the "shpi" (house). When I was in Shala, at the priest's house in 1908, we heard two shots fired. Someone ran in to call the priest to a man who was dying; it was too late. In a dispute about the irrigation channels in the fields, a man had killed his own first cousin. Both were inmates of one large house. The crime excited genuine horror and was loudly discussed. Public opinion seemed to think something should be done—but what? It is the clear duty of a house to take blood as atonement for blood that has been taken. But the house, having already lost a man, cannot make matters any better by taking more of its own blood. This could not be expected; nor could any outsider interfere in what was a matter for the house lord. He could not be both lord of blood and gjaksur—could not owe himself blood. It was, in fact, an example of *patria potestas*. He decided to do nothing but hold a fine funeral to show his regret for the loss; and so sure was he that he was acting correctly that he sent a boy to the priest's

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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CHAPTER IX.

ALBANIAN WOMEN: THEIR FAMILY CEREMONIES.

562 184 The domestic usages of the Albanians vary slightly, according to locality and religion, but are, in their main features, identical. And though the customs surrounding such family ceremonies as births, marriages, and deaths belong naturally more to the domain of women than of men, the latter are not less scrupulous in the fulfilment of the part in these observances which fall to their share.

156 181 Tribal and family pride being, as has been already seen, the leading feature of Albanian character, the desire of offspring, and especially male offspring, is naturally very strong with them. A childless man [554] is designated by an expression which signifies "without a root," and is looked upon as a most unfortunate [754] being. The wish, "May you be childless!" is also considered the most weighty curse that can be launched against a man by his enemy. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the dearest wish of every woman's heart is consequently to be the mother of a numerous family of boys, both for the sake of the future prosperity of the tribe and for the present social consideration which their birth ensures to her.

• 843 When the fact that an Albanian woman is about to

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

become a mother is announced to her husband's family, she becomes thenceforward the object of the most devoted attention on their part, the slightest wish or preference she may express being immediately gratified. Custom, however, forbids her eating certain things, such as pomegranates and snails, and she must not dye her hair more than three times before her baby is born, or some unlucky accident would be sure to happen to her or to the infant. 843

As soon as the baby is born it is washed, and a sickle, with which straw has just been cut, is laid for a few seconds on its stomach to prevent colics. The maternal grandmother, whose privilege it is to perform this office for the baby, then proceeds to swathe its little body tightly in broad swaddling bands of white woollen stuff, and finally deposits it in a narrow wooden cradle. A jar of water is taken to the Hodja or the Papas, according to the creed of the mother, to be blessed, and with some of its contents all the women who officiated at the birth wash their hands. The rest of the water is placed near the mother, and all the women who visit her during the five ensuing days dip their fingers in it and sprinkle her, expressing at the same time a wish that she may have a plentiful supply of milk for the baby, Albanian women making a point of nursing their own children. The relatives are now admitted to felicitate the mother and admire the baby, with the exception of its father, whom custom obliges to keep out of the way and refrain from seeing his child until it is eight days old. The mother is presently placed on a state bed, over which a magnificently embroidered silk coverlet 844 [603] [352] [855] [853] 846

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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through which the animal is led. If the cow steps over the object with the right hoof, it is considered a good augury; if with the left, the omen is unfavourable. If a hen shakes her feathers in the house, or if one of her feathers hangs askew without falling, it foretells the arrival of a friend, or the receipt of news from an absent relative. Should the hen crow like a cock without turning its head to the East, it signifies a death or other serious misfortune. If, during the night, a cock crows at an unusual hour, it is either a sign of a change in the weather, or that important news will arrive in the morning. To an expectant mother, however, it announces that her child will be a boy. Should the dog howl while looking away from the dwelling, it is a sign of death; and if the cat mews repeatedly, that a member of the family will shortly fall ill. If, however, she licks herself frequently, it is merely a sign of rain.

Cats, I may here remark, are treated with great kindness by the Albanians, who, it is said, are not in the habit of laying to their charge the smashing of crockery, or the disappearance of provisions. According to a myth current among the Albanian highlanders, the cat was created by Jesus, who produced one from the sleeve of His mantle when dining in a house infested with mice. To kill a cat is consequently considered a most reprehensible action. When such a family pet dies, the children of the house call in their friends to assist in pussy's obsequies, and, after she has been carried in solemn procession to the grave, the little party sit down to a funeral feast, for which the mother willingly furnishes the necessary viands.